

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-10

TRSE-00 SAJ-01 OMB-01 MC-02 EB-07 SIL-01 LAB-04

COME-00 /094 W

----- 004845

R 081613Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3639

SECDEF

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

USCINCEUR

CINCLANT

USNMR SHAPE

CINCUSAREUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCUSAFE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, MARR, OVIP, MCAP, MILI, PFOR, UK, GW
SUBJ: GREATER NATO WEAPONS STANDARDIZATION URGED BY
BRITISH ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP.

SUMMARY: AN ALL-PARTY GROUP OF BRITISH MPS EXPRESSED CONCERN IN A REPORT PUBLISHED 6 AUGUST THAT THE MILITARY BALANCE IN EUROPE HAS TILTED FURTHER IN FAVOR OF THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF DEFENSE CUTS IN THE WEST, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF A CONTINUOUS BUILD-UP OF WEAPONS IN EASTERN EUROPE. STANDARDIZATION OF WEAPONS WITHIN NATO IS STRONGLY URGED. END SUMMARY.

1. THE "SEVENTH REPORT FROM THE EXPENDITURE COMMITTEE, 1974-75, BRITISH FORCES GERMANY, HOUSE OF COMMONS PAPER 472" PUBLISHED 6 AUGUST BY HMSO REFLECTS THE STRONG CONCERN OF THE MEMBERS OF AN ALL-PARTY DEFENSE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS EXPENDITURE COMMITTEE WHO RECENTLY VISITED NORTHAG AND INSPECTED BRITISH ARMY OF THE RHINE (BAOR) EQUIPMENT/FACILITIES, AS WELL AS RAF OPERATIONAL AIRFIELDS.

2. THE REPORT IDENTIFIES THE DIFFICULTIES THAT BRITISH CUTS IN DEFENSE EXPENDITURE HAVE CREATED FOR UK FORCES IN GERMANY AND THE CONSEQUENT DEGRADATIONS IN THEIR OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES. FOR EXAMPLE, LIMITATIONS ON TRAINING BROUGHT ABOUT BY FUEL CUTS CAUSED BY THE OIL CRISIS, SHORTAGES OF SPARES FOR TANKS AND ARMORED VEHICLES, INCLUDING AMMUNITION, ETC., HAVE ACCORDING TO GENERAL SIR HARRY TUZO, CINC/BAOR, CAUSED BAOR THE RISK OF "LOSING THE PROFESSIONALISM AND SKILL WHICH HITHERTO HAVE BEEN THE ADMIRATION OF OUR ALLIES..." ADDITIONALLY, BAOR'S TRAINING PROGRAM IS AFFECTED BY THE SHORTAGE OF LAND FOR LARGE SCALE EXERCISES AND THE ABSENCE OF SO MANY TROOPS NOW ASSIGNED TO DUTY IN NORTHERN IRELAND. THE REPORT NOTES THAT FOR SOME YEARS NO BRIGADE OR DIVISIONAL EXERCISES HAVE BEEN HELD WITH THE CONSEQUENCE THAT ,A WHOLE GENERATION OF COMMANDERS IS GROWING UP WITH NO EXPERIENCE OF COMMANDING LARGE FORMATIONS IN THE FIELD." THE MPS WERE ,DISTURBED" BY THIS SITUATION AND THE REPORT URGES HIGH PRIORITY FOR RESUMPTION OF FULL-SCALE
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TRAINING.

3. NOTING THE ,VERY SERIOUS SITUATION WHICH CONFRONTS NATO TODAY" THE COMMITTEE EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR MORE STANDARDIZATION OF EQUIPMENT IN NATO FORCES WITHOUT WHICH THE BALANCE IN EUROPE MIGHT BECOME STILL LESS FAVORABLE AND "IF THAT HAPPENS THE RISKS OF NUCLEAR CONFLICT ARE INCREASED". THE REPORT NOTES IN CONNECTION WITH STAN-

DARDIZATION OF AIRCRAFT TYPES AND THE INTEROPERABILITY
OF ALLIED AIRFIELDS, THAT IN THE 2NO ATAF 16 TYPES OF
FUEL DROP TANKS ARE USED,
GING THAT MUCH COULD BE DONE
WITHIN NATO TO STANDARDIZE STORES SUCH AS DROP TANKS AND
BOMBS AND TO LAY DOWN COMMON REFUELLING METHODS".

4. AMONG THE OTHER POINTS EMPHASIZED BY THE REPORT IS
THE COMMITTEE'S UNEQUIVOCAL RECOMMENDATION THAT THE UK
PURCHASE THE FRANCO-GERMAN MAN-PORTABLE ANTI-TANK MISSILE
MILAN.7 "WE CONCLUDE THAT ON ALMOST EVERY COUNT MILAN IS
VITALLY NEEDED AND PURCHASE SHOULD BE CONDUCTED URGENTLY,
PROVIDED THAT THE MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION OF BRITISH
INDUSTRY CAN BE ACHIEVED". (FYI: RUMOR HAS IT HERE THAT
BRITAIN IS TO BUY BOTH HOT AND MILAN, MADE BY EUROMISSILE,
THE AEROSPATIALE AND MBB CONSORTIUM. THE EUROMISSILE
GROUP IS KNOWN TO BE LOOKING FOR OTHER PARTNERS WITHIN

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USCINCEUR
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NATO AND HAS TOLD UK IT WOULD WELCOME PARTICIPATION BY A
BRITISH FIRM. THE BRITISH ATTITUDE APPEARS TO BE THAT
THERE ARE TOO MANY MISSILE MANUFACTURERS IN NATO EUROPE
AT PRESENT AND THAT A CONSORTIUM OF MISSILE MANUFACTURERS
WOULD BE ATTRACTIVE PROVIDED THE CONSORTIUM MANUFACTURED
ALL, REPEAT ALL, TYPES OF MISSILES INSTEAD OF ONLY ANTI-
TANK MISSILES AS AT PRESENT. THE TOW MISSILE IS IN "HOT"
COMPETITION WITH HOT FOR USE IN HELICOPTERS -- TRIALS OF
THE BRITISH EQUIVALENT HAWKSWING APPARENTLY HAVE NOT BEEN
VERY SUCCESSFUL -- BUT RUMORS ABOUND THAT HMG IS NOT ANXI-
OUS TO BUY TOW BECAUSE THE TRADE UNIONS HAVE GIVEN A
CLEAR WARNING THAT IF BUYING WEAPONS ABROAD MEANS LESS
WORK FOR THEIR MEMBERS, THEY WILL NOT STAND FOR FOREIGN
PURCHASES. THE CURRENT DETERIORATING ECONOMIC SITUATION
IN BRITAIN SIMPLY REINFORCES THEIR DETERMINATION TO
"BUY BRITISH". END FYI)

5. THE REPORT REFLECTS STRONGLY THE CONCERN OVER THE
SLOW BUILD-UP OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS IN THE BAOR AND UK
FORCES IN GERMANY. "IN THE END THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR
BASIC STANDARDIZATION OF WEAPONS AND FORCE STRUCTURES
WITHIN NATO TO MAXIMISE THE CAPABILITY OF EXISTING
ARMIES", THE COMMITTEE CONCLUDES.

RICHARDSON

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